

Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Cautions Students About Spring Break Travel

(Phoenix, Ariz. – March 6, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard today reminded students planning spring break trips to be cautious and use common sense when booking travel.

With spring break right around the corner, students will find a number of last-minute, all-inclusive and low-cost travel specials on the Internet and in college newspapers. Unfortunately, many of these “specials” do not deliver what they promise or turn out to be outright scams.

Goddard offered the following tips to avoid being scammed when planning a spring break getaway:

Tips for Booking Online

- Be leery of making reservations with unknown people or businesses that require advance payment or deposits without a written contract.
- Legitimate businesses will always provide a written contract guaranteeing your reservation.
- Beware of travel reservation Web sites that are unfamiliar to you. Scam Web sites offer low-priced fares on travel and hotel accommodations only to steal your credit card information.
- Research a site before making a purchase and stick to trusted travel sites when booking online.

Tips for Booking by Phone

- Don't make any transactions that can be completed only by phone. Legitimate reservation companies will offer the option to book by phone or via the Internet.
- Ask questions about the company's address, a written contract and refund policy.
- Do an Internet search of the address to see if a map shows the location.

Avoid Offers That Are Too Good to Be True

- Dramatically reduced fares are often not legitimate and may require additional payments that the buyer is unaware of when making the reservation.
- Be extremely cautious of nearly-free, all-inclusive vacation packages.
- Often the amenities and perks advertised are not as they appear. There may be additional hidden charges or buyers may be forced to sit through lengthy, high-pressure time-share presentations.
- Always read the fine print before purchasing.
- Purchase travel with a credit card rather than a debit card. Credit cards offer more options for recourse should the travel company attempt to defraud you.

Please visit the Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov for more tips on how to protect yourself when planning travel, making large purchases or applying for credit.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix at 602.542.5763; in Tucson at 520.628.6504; or outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas at 1.800.352.8431. To file a complaint in person, the Attorney General's Office has 36 satellite offices throughout Arizona with volunteers available to help. Locations and hours are posted on the Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov. Please visit the Web site to sign up for scam alerts and weekly messages from Attorney General Goddard.

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